

Organizational Culture in Islamic Education Institution: An Analysis from a Historical Perspective

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Abstract—Organizational culture has a strategic role in encouraging and improving the effectiveness of organizational performance, both in the short and the long term. Organizational culture also acts as the social glue that binds fellow members of a common organization in shared vision and goals. This study is aimed to analyze the organizational culture of *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) *Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah Paya Bundung Medan* from the historical perspective. This research applied a qualitative approach through case study model design. The data collection technique used in this study involved face-to-face interviews, focus group discussion, observation, and documentation studies. The result shows that the uniqueness of this *pesantren* founded on the initiative of the Karo family and the union of Karo Muslim scholars who did not graduate from *pesantren* but want their descendants to have good Islamic knowledge. It can be concluded from this study that the establishment of an Islamic boarding school by a group of people who do not graduate from Islamic education institution seems effective in creating a unique identity that makes it different any other similar institutions.

Keywords—Organizational culture, Islamic education institution, an Islamic boarding school

I. INTRODUCTION

The educational institution as a forum that formally carries out regular, planned and programmed educational activities becomes a goal of every stakeholder. Parents consider themselves as people who are interested in leaving their children to study at an institution. Furthermore, for companies, they are groups that are interested in using graduates of educational institutions to be able to become strong employees in the future. Every community towards educational institutions anticipates this expectation. However, not all educational institutions can carry out this mandate. This is due to several factors contributing to the implementation of these activities. The factors can come from the inside and outside of the organizations. The factors originating from inside organizations are mostly about organizational culture.

An organization is formed to achieve a certain goal. Therefore, the success of an organization is shown by its ability to achieve goals that have been set before. The performance of the organization largely determines the success of an organization in achieving its goals, and it is

strongly influenced by external and internal factors of an organization. [1]

Islamic boarding schools, compared to other systems of educational institutions in Indonesia, can be categorized as the oldest educational system that still survives up to present days. Using traditional Islamic educations in the Middle East region as the reference, Islamic educational institutions in general consists of three types; *madrassa*, *kuttub*, and *mosques*. Until the second half of the 19th century, these three traditional Islamic education institutions were relatively able to survive. However, since the last quarter of the 19th century, a firmer wave of renewal and modernization has led to changes that cannot be reversed in the existence of traditional Islamic educational institutions [2]. In 1924, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk abolished the *medresse* system (*madrassa*) in Turkey and transformed it into public schools. Meanwhile, in Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser abolished the *madrassa* and *kuttub* systems in 1961 with the reason of integration or nationalization of the national educational system [2]. However, in Indonesia, *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) as Indonesian Islamic educational institution can continue its existence up to this present time.

The ability of *pesantren* to survive as time goes on proves that this institution has a good organizational culture in facing new changes. It happens because the organizational culture itself consists of two components; 1) value, as something that is believed by the people of the organization to consider what is wrong and right, and 2) belief, as the attitude about how something should work in the organization [3]. The changes that occur in the implementation of education are expected to change the organizational culture according to the conditions that exist.

As a reference, a research on organizational culture that has been carried out in three *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in Indonesia (Lirboyo, Gontor, and Tebuireng) by Mardiyah shows that the success of Islamic boarding school to exist to this day is due to *Kiai's* leadership competence in maintaining the organizational culture [4].

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. The definition of organizational culture

The word culture, or *budaya* in Bahasa, comes from Sanskrit "*budhayah*" as the plural form of the basic word "*buddhi*" which means reason or everything related to mind, values and mental attitudes[5]. Furthermore, the word "*kebudayaan*" began to be used in 1930 and quickly takes a fixed place in the Indonesian language. The word "*kebudayaan*" means everything created by the human mind [6].

It is also stated that the word "*kebudayaan*" is a development of compound word "Budi-daya" in Indonesia, and it means the power of mind or the power of reason [7]. Therefore, in Bahasa, "*budidaya*" means empowering mind or what is called as "culture" in English, and it is derived from the Latin "colere" which originally means as a process of doing something (cultivating agricultural land) and developing the meaning of culture as all human power and effort to change nature. The term *culture* in English has been taken by Indonesian as the same word for "budaya". In Arabic, this term is called *Tsaqafah*.

Some experts define organizational culture in very diverse ways because each of them emphasizes on a different point of view. Things like that are natural as we look an object from different angles, we will describe what we see in a different way [1]. Some say "An Organization's culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or develop by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to these problems [8].

Furthermore, organizational culture as a cognitive framework consists of attitudes, values, behavioural norms, and expectations that are shared by the members of organization. The root of every organizational culture is a series of core characteristics that are collectively valued by the members of the organization[9]. Some other experts explain that the common perceptions of the members of an organization are an understandable system [10]. Organizational culture is concerned with how workers feel the characteristics of organizational culture, not whether they are like them or not.

Among the opinion of these experts, it seems that some of them provide a more philosophical understanding, but some are more operational. From this definition, it can be concluded that organizational culture is the basic philosophy of an organization that contains shared beliefs, norms, and values that are the core characteristics of how to do things in the organization. These beliefs, norms, and values become the guidance of all human resources in the organization, and it is used to carry out their performance.

B. The establishment of organizational culture

It requires a long and gradual time to form a healthy organizational culture. In its progress, an

organization experiences ups and down, and applies an organizational culture that is different from one time to another. Culture can be seen as something that surrounds the lives of many people from day to day, and it can be shaped. If culture is reduced in scope to the level of organisation or even smaller groups; it can be seen how culture is formed, instilled, developed, and finally engineered, regulated and changed.

The process of forming organizational culture generally starts from the source; the founding philosophy [1]. The founder of the organization emphasizes what kind of organizational culture should be carried out in the organization. This basic philosophy greatly influences the criteria needed for recruiting and selecting human resources. With the availability of human resources, all workers in an organization are at various levels; at the top, middle, lower, and workers. Furthermore, top management will establish a climate behaviour for what is accepted and unaccepted in an organization. For this reason, top management needs to disseminate information on organizational culture that is set to all human resources.

The process of forming organizational culture is carried out in three ways, namely; 1) The founder only recruits and keeps workers who think and feel in the same way to do it, 2) Indoctrinating and socializing workers in ways of thinking and feeling something, 3) The founder's behaviour acts as role models that encourage workers to identify with them and internalize beliefs, values, and assumptions. When an organization is successful, the founder's vision becomes visible to be a major determinant of success [10]. The process of forming an organizational culture as follows:

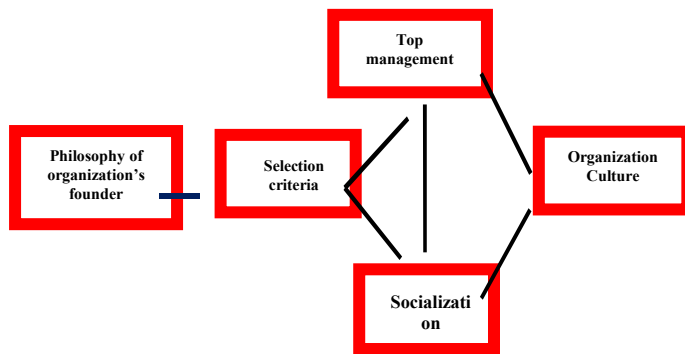


Fig. 1. Organizational culture formation [10]

Figure 1 explains that the original culture was derived from the philosophy of its founder, then this culture greatly influenced the criteria used in hiring employees. The action of top management determines whether the general climate of behaviour is acceptable or not. The level of success in socializing the institution's culture depends on the suitability of new employee values with organizational values in the selection process as well as on top management preferences for socialization methods.

The socialization process needs to be carried out in the following order: 1) The prearrival stage, is a period of

learning in the socialization process that occurs before the new worker joins the organization, 2) The encounter stage, is a stage of socialization where new workers see can see what the organization wants to face the possibility between expectations and reality that might be different, 3) The metamorphosis stage, is a stage of the socialization process in which new workers change and adjust to work in group and organization [10].

The function of organizational culture in the program of achieving organizational effectiveness can be seen in the following figure:

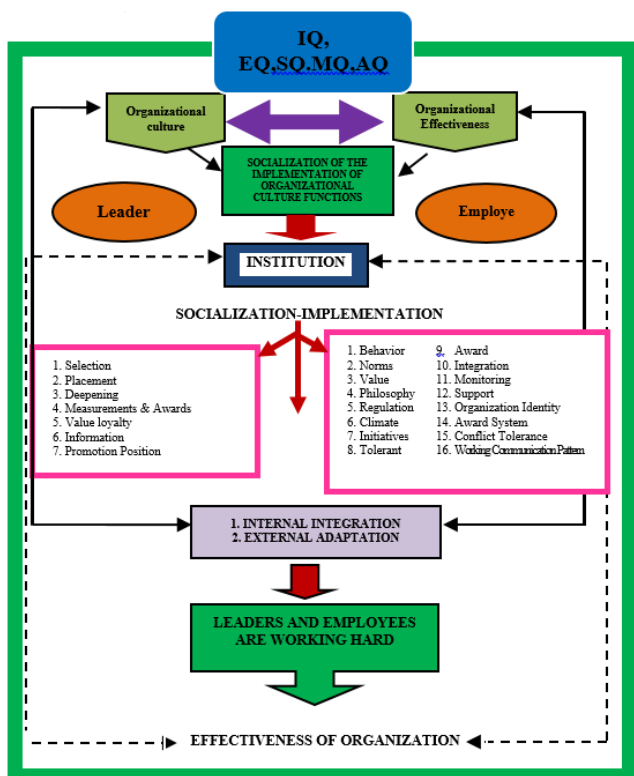


Fig. 2. Organizational culture and the achievement of organizational effectiveness [11]

Thus, it can be concluded that the functions of organizational culture are: 1) showing the identity 2) showing clear role limits, 3) showing collective commitment, 4) building social system stability, 5) building a healthy and reasonable mind and 6) clarifying standards of behaviour. An important stage in the process of cultural formation is in the process of socialization to all human resources in the organization. Socialization is a process of adjusting workers to organizational culture.

C. Organizational culture urgency for the advancement of islamic educational institutions

Islamic education in Indonesia has been going on since the arrival of Islam in Indonesia. According to historical records, Islam arrived in Indonesia peacefully, in contrast to other regions such as; Egypt, Iraq, Persia, and other regions. The role of traders and preachers was very important in the

process of Islamization in Indonesia. One way of the Islamization process is through education.

Education has significant role in educating the nation. Apart from that, there has also been a dynamic development of Islamic education in Indonesia. The most strategic dynamic is Islamic education as a sub-system of national education. This means that Islamic education is recognized for its existence in the national education system, and it is divided into three things. *First*, Islamic education as an institution; *second*, Islamic education as a subject; and *third*, Islamic education as a subject [12].

Law No. 20 Year 2003 is the National Education System Law which was implemented to replace the UUSPN (Law of National Education System) No. 2 the Year 1989. According to this Law, education is divided into three types; 1) Formal education, (elementary, junior high, high school, and university), 2) Non-formal education organized by the community, 3) Informal education. In Article 18, it is mentioned that: "the Secondary education is in the form of Senior Secondary School/Islamic Boarding Schools, Islamic Senior High School, Middle Vocational Schools/Islamic Boarding Schools, and Vocational Islamic Schools or other equivalent forms".

The UUSPN in 2003 is a recent development of Islamic education in the national education system. With the promulgation of the UUSPN, other Islamic education institutions beside Madrasa have been perfectly recognized as one of the national educational institutions. This is stated in articles 17 and 18. Therefore, *pesantren* as an Islamic educational institution began to find their form freely among other Islamic education institutions. The legality of Islamic boarding school has been equated with other educational legalities, both in the curricular system and the learning system. Islamic boarding school no longer has to take the tests of equality or what refers to the madrasa as the institution which has been recognized by the government. Islamic boarding school has obtained its legality even though it does not follow the curriculum or program provided by the government.

Madrasah/Islamic boarding schools are a form of community culture. As a community, madrasah/ Islamic boarding schools' also have their own culture. In this context, madrasa/Islamic boarding school culture is understood as the perspective of organizational culture. It is also understood that culture refers to values, belief systems, norms, and ways of thinking that are characteristics of people in an organization [13]. Thus, organizational culture is a pattern of group behaviour in the form of values, beliefs and habits in one organization. It is understood here that organizational culture is a concept that is transformed from a shared life and then becomes a pattern of thinking and acting to provide direction in order to experience and express how the experience is seen, assessed and carried out through group collaboration in the organization.

The concept of madrasa/Islamic boarding school culture which is developed by the head of madrasa/Islamic boarding schools and other leaders is at the core of managerial behaviour. Madrasa/Islamic boarding school culture provides madrasa/Islamic boarding school citizens with a broad framework for understanding the problems of difficult work and complex relationships in madrasa/Islamic boarding school. The head of madrasa/Islamic boarding schools needs to understand the madrasa/Islamic boarding schools culture in depth so that the leaders can be better at using and maintaining the values, beliefs, and attitudes that are important to promote the stability and maintenance of the learning environment.

Furthermore, culture includes deep value patterns, beliefs, and traditions that have formed more than just historical lessons (Madrasa/Islamic boarding schools). Madrasa/Islamic boarding school culture consists of “general beliefs of the teachers, students and the heads of madrasa/Islamic boarding schools. This definition is in the spectrum of education to create an effective learning environment. The focus of madrasa/Islamic boarding school activities is more on the importance of pure values to teach and influence youths.

The culture of madrasa/Islamic boarding school is the power that causes the service formats in the past and helps maintains and shapes the future collective vision of teaching and learning that should be done. The culture of madrasa/Islamic boarding school directs final decisions that help understand the madrasa/Islamic boarding school.

It can be said that many of the discoveries of researchers have emphasized the evidence of madrasa/Islamic boarding school culture. Madrasa/Islamic boarding school cultural richness and voice are strongly associated with the improvement of student’s achievement, motivation, and productivity as well as teacher satisfaction. The cultural influences of madrasa/Islamic boarding school are in five dimensions; academic challenges, comparison of achievements, madrasa/Islamic boarding school society, achievement awareness, the perception of madrasa/Islamic boarding school goals. However, the residents of madrasa/Islamic boarding school receive support in proportions that students are more motivated to learn in madrasa/Islamic boarding school which have a strong culture.

Thus, each madrasah/Islamic boarding school has its own culture, some of them are strong, well functioned, while some others are weak and less functioned. Therefore, the effective madrasa/Islamic boarding school has a strong culture and function to support the vision of excellence. A vision that is driven by the madrasa/Islamic boarding school leaders in collaboration with the teachers will build some values and traditions for structuring the madrasa/Islamic boarding school because the values and traditions of the madrasa/Islamic boarding school help the perfection of madrasa/Islamic boarding school.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative descriptive case study model. Descriptive research is a research that seeks to describe the existing problem solving based on data, and it aims to solve the problems systematically and factually regarding the facts and characteristics of the population [14]. This research was conducted at *Tarbiyah Islamiyah Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah Paya Bundung Islamic* boarding school in Medan Tuntungan North Sumatra in 2017. Data collection techniques were interviews, Focus Group Discussion, observation, and documentation studies.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah Paya Bundung Medan Islamic boarding school is an Islamic educational institution which was established on the initiative of Karonese and Karonese Muslim Scholars Association which were not the alumni of Islamic boarding schools. They wanted their descendants to have good Islamic knowledge, and this boarding school has a long history of about 32 years old. It was described that the first ten years are the birth phase in which they are looking for a format that remains as a whole and independent Islamic boarding schools.

Furthermore, in the second of 10 years of the growth phase, the Islamic boarding school improved and adjusted both the format and the content of the curriculum as well as the facilities, the infrastructures, and the human resources in the Islamic boarding school. Finally, the last ten years are the adult phase which can be seen from the good establishment of getting new students, facilities, caregivers’ resources and the stable organizational culture to be a code of conduct for members of Islamic boarding school and organizational activities in achieving their goals. According to the theory of life-cycle theory the theory of organizational growth), this Islamic boarding school can be said as having their adult phase in which it can be characterized by an established organization and has a stable organizational culture [15].

In the context of this study, *Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah Islamic* boarding school was built on the history of successes that have been achieved and have successfully built an image that can shape the character of the institution, thus in successfully building an identity that can be distinguished from any other Islamic boarding schools. Every organization must have an identity, the articulation of the identity is reflected in the ethos, goals, and values of the organization. Self-identity shows a sense of individuality that can help the organizations distinguish themselves from other organizations within the scope of competition [16].

This makes the Islamic boarding school community has a social cement [17] and an urge to continue in maintaining the organizational culture as Goffe and Jones mention that organizations that can unite people in organizations are called as communal organizations which are characterized by a high level of sociability and solidarity [18]. Furthermore, according to Laura & Al Ries, organizations that are mature and big (big companies) tend to be shackled by habits (the way they are) [19]. To avoid the thoughts that are shackled by the past, the Islamic boarding school leader is required to be a great leader who always thinks and learn from the future (learning to create new things from imagination) and not

thinking that it is the only way of learning from the past because experience can mislead the organization. It becomes a desire for every organization, especially the Islamic boarding school in developing positive inspiration for the progress of the Islamic boarding school in the future. The expected leader is certainly able to maintain a good old legacy and positive new findings.

Based on the context of this study, it shows that the leaders of Islamic boarding school always make adjustments to match the recent condition. This Islamic boarding school adheres to the GontorPonorogo modern Islamic boarding school education system because the early caregivers are the alumni from GontorPonorogo. The pattern implemented also follows Gontor Ponorogo. However, Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah Islamic boarding school has made adjustments by adding the curriculum of the ministry of religion to Tsanawiyahand Aliyah levels. The leaders of the Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah learn from the future, and it influences the increasing number of students every year.

As what Morgan said that too strong organizational culture often encourages organizations to be egocentric and inward-looking as if only the best company tends to underestimate and reluctant to recognize the advantages of competitors [20]. With this fact, the real organisational culture is like the two sides of the coin. On the one side, culture can be an asset for an organization while on the other side, it can become a liability (an inhibiting factor in organizational life). This pattern is relevant to the theory of organizational life cycle proposed by Wirawan in the following figure:

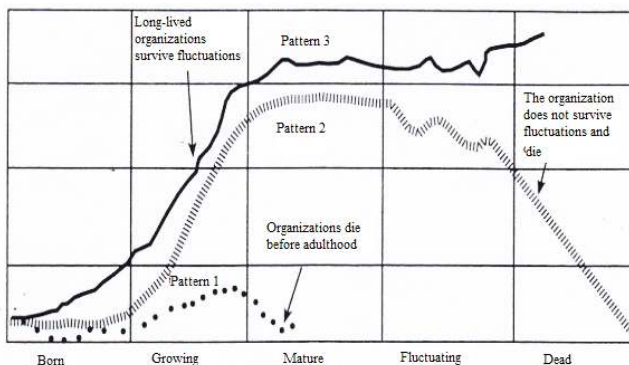


Fig. 3: Cycles of Organizational Life Patterns[21]

The prevailing pattern at the *Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah Paya Bundung Medan* is in pattern 3. It means the organization is long-lived, survives from fluctuations because it can adjust based on the environmental conditions accompanied by the vision of Islamic boarding school which refers to regeneration. This response to the wishes of the community, especially the parents of the students. To be one of the factors of an increase in the number of students every year. Based on the analysis of the research findings, it can be concluded that: "Every organization can survive if it has a clear vision, mission and objectives as well as leadership capabilities that are adapted to the dynamics of the existing environment (internal and external)"

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